

**PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION
FOR QUALIFYING SENIOR CITIZENS AND DISABLED VETERANS
(Media Release)**

NAME AND ADDRESS OF CONTACT:

**Elbert County Assessor
221 Comanche Street
PO Box 26
Kiowa, CO 80117**

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 303-621-3101

SUGGESTED RELEASE: January 1 through July 1

The Colorado Constitution establishes a property tax exemption for senior citizens and disabled veterans. For those who qualify, 50 percent of the first \$200,000 in actual value of the primary residence is exempted from property tax. The State of Colorado pays the property taxes on the exempted value. Qualifying seniors are urged to submit applications if they have not yet done so.

SENIOR CITIZEN EXEMPTION:

Basic Qualifications - Generally, each of the following statements must be true to qualify for the senior citizen exemption. The qualifying senior:

- ♦ Must be at least 65 years old on January 1 of the year the application is filed; and
- ♦ Must be the current owner of record, and listed as the owner of record for at least 10 consecutive years prior to January 1; and
- ♦ Must occupy the property as his/her primary residence, and must have done so for at least 10 consecutive years prior to January 1.

Exceptions to Basic Qualifications - The applicant may still qualify if one or more of the following statements are true:

- ♦ Ownership is in the spouse's name, and the spouse also occupies the property;
- ♦ Ownership has been transferred to or purchased by a trust, corporate partnership or other legal entity solely for estate planning purposes;
- ♦ The qualifying senior or his/her spouse was or is confined to a health care facility;
- ♦ The applicant was forced to move when the prior residence was condemned in an eminent domain proceeding;
- ♦ The applicant is the surviving spouse of a senior who met the requirements on January 1, 2002, or on any January 1 thereafter.
- ♦ The qualifying senior citizen's prior residence was destroyed or otherwise rendered uninhabitable by a natural disaster.

How to Apply - To apply, you must complete the appropriate application form and return it to the assessor by July 15. The assessor must accept late applications until September 15. The "Short Form" application may be used by qualifying senior citizens who meet each of the basic qualifications. The "Long Form" application must be used by applicants who satisfy one or more of the exceptions to the basic qualifications. If you would like to receive an application form or a brochure that explains the senior citizen exemption in greater detail, or if you have any questions regarding the exemption, please call the assessor's office at 303-621-3101

DISABLED VETERAN EXEMPTION:

Basic Qualifications – Generally, each of the following statements must be true to qualify:

- ♦ The applicant must be a veteran who sustained a service-connected disability while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States. This includes members of the National Guard and Reserves who sustained injuries while serving on active duty;
- ♦ The applicant must have been honorably-discharged;
- ♦ The United States Department of Veterans Affairs has rated the applicant's service-connected disability as 100 percent permanent and total. VA unemployability awards do not meet the requirement for determining an applicant's eligibility;
- ♦ The applicant must be the owner of record and must have been the owner of record since January 1 of the current year; and
- ♦ The applicant must have occupied the property as his/her primary residence since January 1 of the current year.

Exceptions to Basic Qualifications – The applicant may still qualify if one or more of the following statements are true:

- ♦ Ownership is in the spouse's name, and the spouse also occupies the property;
- ♦ Ownership has been transferred to or purchased by a trust, corporate partnership or other legal entity solely for estate planning purposes;
- ♦ The qualifying disabled veteran or his/her spouse was or is confined to a health care facility.
- ♦ The applicant was forced to move when the prior residence was condemned in an eminent domain proceeding.
- ♦ The applicant is the surviving spouse of a previously qualified veteran who met the requirements through the Division of Veterans Affairs.

How to Apply - To apply, you must file a completed application with the Colorado Division of Veterans Affairs by July 1. The Division of Veterans Affairs may accept late applications until September 1 if the applicant can show good cause for missing the July 1 deadline. The surviving spouse of a prequalified veteran must apply directly to the assessor's office no later than July 1. If you would like to receive an application form or a brochure that explains the disabled veteran exemption in greater detail, or if you have any questions regarding the exemption, please call the assessor's office at 303-621-3101